REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-8, 10-13, 15-16, 18, 20, 22 and 24-26 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended and claims 24-26 are added.

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 10-13, 15, 16 and 18, and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-5 and 8.

A.   The Office Action rejects claims 1, 7, 20 and 22 (note that claims 21 and 23 were canceled by the previous Amendment) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over USP 5,517,891 to Sica in view of JP-A-2003-29742. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the means for attaching comprises "one or more of a hook-and-loop fastener, a button, a zipper, a snap, or lacing." Support for this amendment may be found at, for example, paragraph [0005] of the specification. This feature is clearly not present in the applied references, in which the "cover" is attached by screws or adhesive.

For at least this reason, claim 1 is patentably distinct from the applied references. Claims 7, 20 and 22, which are the only other rejected claims, depend from claim 1, and are allowable at least for their dependence on an allowable base claim.
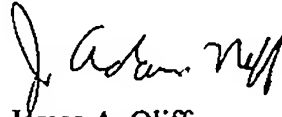
B.   New claims 24-26 are allowable for their dependence on allowable base claims, and for additional features they recite.

*   *   *

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Prompt allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: January 4, 2008

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